GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4309
ANSWERED ON:21.08.2000
PROTECTION OF RHINOCEROS
DALPAT SINGH PARASTE;RENUKA CHOWDHURY

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the newsitem captioned "Rhinos could become extinct as fund crunch hits Kaziranga" appearing in the Rajasthan Patrika of June 9, 2000;

(b) if so, whether the Government have gone into the threatened extinction of the one horned Rhinoceros due to fund crunch hitting Kaziranga; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to conserve and regenerate the threatened World renowned one horned Rhinoceros?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL MARANDI)

(a) No Sir, the news item did not appear in the Jaipur edition of Rajasthan Patrika of June 9, 2000.

(b) The population estimate of Rhinos in Kaziranga National Park shows a rising trend. However central government provides financial assistance for improvement of infrastructure and effective protection of Rhinos and their habitat. The government of India have released following assistance under the centrally sponsored scheme "Development of National Parks and Sanctuaries" during the last three years.

Year	Release (Rs in lakhs)
1997-98	50.89
1998-99	50.85
1999-2000	0.44

(c) Following steps have been taken by the Government to conserve one horned Rhinoceros:

1. Hunting of wild animals included in Schedule I to IV of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 has been banned by the law.

2. Special projects for protection and conservation of tiger, elephant and rhinos and their habitat are being implemented.

3. Raids are carried out by the wildlife authorities, whenever information of illegal trade in wild animals reaches them.

4. International trade in endangered species of animals and articles made thereof is regulated under the provisions of the Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

5. Regional and sub-regional offices of wildlife preservation have been set up mostly at the main export centres of the country to prevent smuggling of wildlife products.

6. Interdepartmental co-ordination has been enhanced with other enforcement organisation like police, BSF, customs, ITBP, coast guard etc., Training programme on enforcement of Wildlife (Protection) Act is also conducted.

7. Staff in national parks and sanctuaries are being provided modern arms, wireless equipments and communication facilities to check poaching in the national parks and sanctuaries.

8. Analogous to the Centre, the states have also been asked to set up co- ordination Committee of all enforcement agencies so that there is effective co-operation to check poaching and control of illegal trade.